

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 16, 2022**  
**Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

**Convened:** 1:55 pm

**Present:** Leah D. Basbanes, chair, Kieran D. Meehan, vice chair, Ronald J. Mikol, member;

**Interim Town Administrator Interview – 2:00pm-3:00pm**

**James O'Mara Jr. - Amherst, NH**

Mr. O'Mara introduced himself and elaborated on his experience. He has 30 years Department of Corrections experience, is familiar with Police, Fire, Highway, Water operations. He also emphasized that he is familiar with the budget process. Mr. O'Mara expressed very strong opinions of what would happen if the town passed a Town Charter. Including what he felt he would do as Town Administrator in such an event. Mr. O'Mara also stressed that communication is top priority in his management style, and summarized by saying he sees himself as a "coach." To that end Mr. O'Mara also stressed the benefits of disruption and "breaking things" in order to help build a new culture in Town Hall and for reforming practices and policies.

**Interim Town Administrator Interview – 3:05pm – 3:55pm**

**David DeManche - Uxbridge, Ma**

Mr. DeManche began by emphasizing his 27 years of Town Administrator experience in small communities. He conceded he's never been a Town Manager. But while there are differences between the two, they're mostly the same job. He then elaborated on his familiarity with the budget process, including certification of Free Cash. He suggested one of the things he would work on would be the creation of a financial team. Mr. DeManche also highlighted his familiarity with Water Commissions, working on Affordable Housing, and noted his experience with regional school systems. He also to his touted his success in creating public services like a food pantry program. Mr. DeManche also spoke about the various software's and technology he is familiar with using in a municipal setting. He then emphasized his feeling that it is important for a Town Administrator to have an open door policy in management style and to be very approachable both for town employees and for the public. Being able to work with diverse people is important to the job.

**Interim Town Administrator Interview – 5:00pm – 5:45pm**

**Jesse Limanek - Sutton, Ma**

Mr. Limanek introduced himself as someone who's familiar with municipal work. Although he's never been a Town Administrator or a Town Manager, he has served in an elected capacity, most prominently as a three term Selectboard member. Still, based on his experience as an elected official he expressed the feeling that an important element of the job is "being there for residents." Mr. Limanek then went over the various procedures, software's, and grant writing processes he was familiar with. He's been involved in the municipal finance process including the establishment of budgets. He is familiar with the town meeting process and how appropriations are made. He emphasized his ability to work consistent hours and promised he would "get the job done." He noted for the record that as a Selectman he always developed strong relationships with Sutton's Town Managers. He then spoke about the need for an open door policy and a team based approach to management.

**Candidate Deliberations – 5:46pm – 6:46pm**

The Board then deliberated on the candidates discussing different things they liked or disliked about each. Replacing Mr. Palaia, even on an interim basis, will be difficult. The Interim will also be walking into Annual Town Meeting and having to live with a budget and town meeting warrant mostly compiled by Mr. Palaia. The Board felt a sense of urgency given a number of pending retirements among department heads and other critical employees. The Board also agreed that the likely length of term for an Interim Town Administrator will be several months to a year. Current expiration under the circumstances was expected to be sometime in

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December 2022. Possible review at that time to extend if warranted by events. It was agreed to interview further candidates with another meeting scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Mikol at 6:46 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meehan and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by

*Susan Bresnick*

Susan Bresnick  
Assistant Town Accountant

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